

Achieving Maturity



How to Be Led by the Holy Spirit (Part 1)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again at the beginning of a new week sharing with you Keys To Successful Living which God has placed in my hand through many years of personal experience and Christian ministry. My theme for this week is "How to be Led by the Holy Spirit." Understanding and applying the truths it contains is essential for your success in the life of faith.

But first, let me say thank you to those of you who have been writing to me. Before I finish this talk we'll be giving you a mailing address to which you may write. It means a great deal to me to hear how this radio ministry of mine has been helping you and blessing you. So please take time to write, even if it's only a brief personal note. Now, back to our theme, "How to be Led by the Holy Spirit."

By way of introduction I need to explain certain basic facts about the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit. Somebody commented once that in the last centuries the Holy Spirit has been the most ignored person in the church. There is a terrible dearth of knowledge and understanding of him amongst Christians, even today. I'm going to begin with some words of Jesus found in John 16:12B15. He's taking farewell of his disciples at this point and he's explaining that he's going to leave but in his place he's going to send the Holy Spirit. And then he begins to explain to them what the Holy Spirit will do, how he will minister to them and the provision that he will make for them through the Holy Spirit. This is what he says:

> "I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own initiative, but whatever he hears, he will speak; and he will disclose to you what is to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall take of mine and shall disclose it to you. All things that the Father has are mine; therefore I said, that he takes of mine, and will disclose it to you." (NIV)

I want to point out to you four very important facts about the Holy Spirit that emerge from those words of Jesus. First of all, and the most important and often the least understood, is that the Holy Spirit is a person. Jesus breaks the rules of

grammar in the version that we have in the Greek language. In promising the Holy Spirit he says, "When he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth…" Now the Greek language has three genders: masculine, feminine and neuter. And the appropriate pronoun for each is indicated by the gender. For the masculine, he; for the feminine, she; for the neuter, it. The word for "spirit" in Greek, pneuma, is neuter. So, the grammatically correct pronoun is "it." But the laws of grammar are broken in these verses to emphasize that the Holy Spirit is not an "it" but a "he." Jesus says, "When he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth…" So the first thing we need to understand about the Holy Spirit is that he is a person. God the Father is a person, Jesus Christ the Son is a person, and the Holy Spirit is likewise a person. And in order to be successful in our relationship with the Holy Spirit, we have to learn to relate to him as a person.

Second, the Holy Spirit is now the personal representative of the godhead on earth. The Father is in heaven; Jesus, in personal presence, is in heaven at the Father's right hand; but the Spirit is on earth. And as long as the present dispensation continues the Holy Spirit is the resident personal representative of the godhead on earth. And we need to treat him that way. We need to treat him with the same honor that we give to the Father and to the Son. He is God.

Third, the Holy Spirit is the sole administrator of the wealth of the godhead. That's very important. Jesus says there, "He [the Holy Spirit] shall glorify me; for he shall take of mine, and shall disclose it to you." Then he goes on: "All things that the Father has are mine; therefore I said, that he takes of mine, and will disclose it to you." So everything that the Father has, Jesus has. The Father and the Son share their total infinite wealth. But the one who reveals and interprets that which the Father and the Son have is the Holy Spirit. I tell people many times God has a storehouse that is just full of every kind of good thing that we will ever need for time and eternity but the one who keeps the storehouse is the Holy Spirit. So if you want to be rich in the blessings of God, you'd better make friends with the keeper of the storehouse because if you don't relate rightly to the Holy Spirit you can be legally entitled to the whole inheritance but in actual fact, enjoy nothing of it. So bear that in mind. If you want access to the wealth and the blessings and the provisions of the Father and the Son, it's through the Holy Spirit that you will receive them.

Then the fourth fact there is that everything the Holy Spirit does glorifies Jesus. Jesus said, "He shall glorify me." That's very important because once we cease to glorify Jesus in our services, in our lives, in our speech, in our actions, the Holy Spirit withdraws. He will not give himself, he will not impart his grace and his wisdom and his power to anything that does not glorify Jesus.

I remember in the local church in which I attended sometime back we had a specially blessed and anointed service. Afterwards I said to the worship leader, "You know why this service was particularly anointed and particularly blessed? Because everything from beginning to end focused on Jesus and glorified him and that pleases the Holy Spirit." And when we operate that way then the Holy Spirit endorses us, he anoints us, he flows through us, but the moment we cease to glorify Jesus, the Holy Spirit is grieved and he withdraws and waits until we come back to our primary task of glorifying Jesus.

You see, there are two essential roles that the Holy Spirit plays in our lives as God's children. The first is it's through him that we become children of God. It's through the Holy Spirit that we are born again, born from above and become members of God's family. Jesus speaks about this in John 3:5B8:

> "Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, You must be born again. The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going: so is every one who is born of the Spirit." (NAS)

Notice that phrase, "born of the Spirit." It's by that experience that you become a child of God. There is no other way to become a child of God. The Holy Spirit comes in through your faith in Jesus and in the word of God and he imparts to you a totally new life, a spiritual life, a life which is the life of God projected through the Holy Spirit into you. Jesus says there are two kinds of birth. That which is born of the flesh is flesh and can never be otherwise. And in the flesh we were born the sons of Adam but not as children or God. But through the new birth, by the Holy Spirit, we become children of God, we become members of God's family. But we are only children, we are only babies.

It's not God's purpose for us to remain permanently children. God has a plan for us to grow up into mature sons. But this is where we are again dependent on the Holy Spirit. Apart from the Holy Spirit we cannot grow up, we cannot mature. Paul says in Romans 8:14:

> "For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."

The word "sons" there is not the same as the world "children" in the other passage. This means a mature son, one who is responsible, one who is in control of his life, one who knows how to act, one who has authority. How do we come to that place of maturity? Paul says, "all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God." That's the second great ministry of the Spirit in our lives as members of God's family, it's to mature us. But this only comes by one process, being led by the Spirit of God. There is no other way to maturity. And it is a continuing present tense, as is brought out by the translation which I read. We have to be continually led every day, every hour, in every situation by the Spirit of God. That's the only way we can live as mature sons of God.

The tragedy in the church today is that uncountable numbers of people who have been born again of the Spirit of God have never learned to be led by the Spirit of God. Consequently, they never achieve maturity, they always remain, in some sense, retarded spiritually. Not because the provision is not there but because they have not understood how to avail themselves of the provision. The provision is to be led by the Holy Spirit. That's why throughout my talks this week I'm going to focus on this vital subject: How to be led by the Holy Spirit. I want you to understand this is the only way you can ever come to spiritual maturity as a true son of God by being regularly, continually led by the Holy Spirit.

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this same time. For the rest of the week I'll be sharing with you a number of important biblical principles that will help you personally to be led by the Holy Spirit. My special offer this week is my book, The Baptism in the Holy Spirit, which explains in clear practical language how you can have a personal, supernatural encounter with the Holy Spirit that can transform the rest of your life. Also, my complete series of talks this week on "How to be Led by the Holy Spirit, Part 1" is available in a single, carefully edited cassette. Stay tuned for details.

Radio Program

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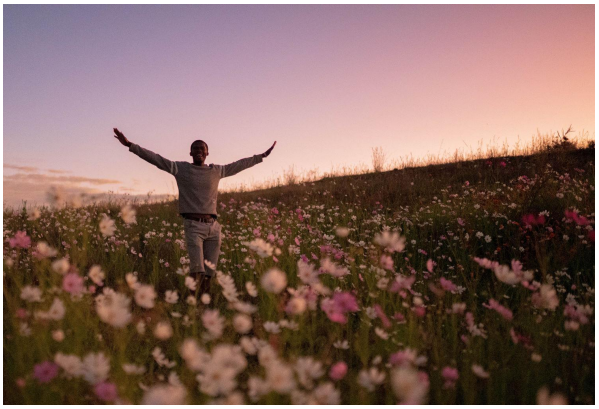

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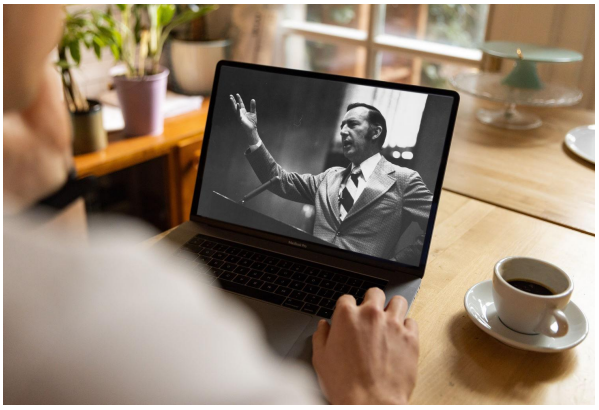

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